

### ***Over 4 Million Seniors Will Receive \$250 Checks Over the Next Several Months***

**Washington, D.C.** – Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-2) today announced that Medicare will begin to mail \$250 ‘donut hole’ checks to tens of thousands of senior citizens starting today. Under the recently enacted Health Reform law, seniors who fall in the “donut hole” coverage gap in 2010 will receive this one-time tax-free \$250 rebate check. These checks will continue to be mailed monthly over the next several months.

The checks are just the first benefit from Health Reform for seniors in the Medicare Prescription Drug program. Beginning in January 2011, seniors in the donut hole will receive a 50% discount on brand name drugs. By 2020, the donut hole will be completely closed.

“Many people spend thousands of dollars each year on prescription drug costs. This check is a down-payment on reducing prescription drug costs for seniors and eventually closing the ‘donut hole’ altogether,” Congressman Bishop said. “This is the first example of how the Health Care Reform bill strengthens Medicare and helps seniors.”

Medicare recipients do not have to do anything to receive the \$250 check. Once their drug costs for the year hit \$2,830, the one-time check will be issued automatically. However, Congressman Bishop warns seniors to beware of potential fraud.

“We have already seen census scams this year, which caused confusion, especially for our senior citizens,” said Congressman Bishop. “I hope people will take caution when reading mail regarding the checks.”

Affordable prescription drugs for seniors are one of many benefits in the new Health Reform law.

Other benefits for seniors include:

- Provides free preventive care services under Medicare, beginning in 2011.

## **Bishop Announces Seniors Soon to Receive "Donut Hole" Checks**

Thursday, 10 June 2010 12:50

---

- Strengthens Medicare by extending its solvency by an additional 12 years, from 2017 to 2029.
- Improves seniors' access to doctors.
- Continues to reduce waste, fraud and abuse.
- Improves care by helping doctors communicate and coordinate.
- Expands home and community-based services to keep seniors in their home, instead of in nursing homes.

The "donut hole" coverage gap is the period in the prescription drug benefit (once their prescription drug costs exceed \$2,830) in which the beneficiary pays 100 percent of the cost of their drugs until they hit the catastrophic coverage threshold.

Last year, roughly 97,800 Medicare beneficiaries in the State of Georgia and 6,600 in the Second Congressional District fell in the "donut hole" and received no extra help to defray the cost of their prescription drugs. Under the new Health Reform help is on the way.

**###**